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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #03150-85

19 June 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM:

Assistant National Intelligence Officer for Europe

SUBJECT: June 14 IG on Berlin Air Corridors

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1. Assistant Secretary Burt in the chair launched a number of new projects [redacted] to prepare for our eventual response to unilateral Soviet reservations in the Berlin air corridors. He urged that preparations for Allied demonstration flights be completed by early August but stressed this timing was his own proposal and had not yet been cleared by SECSTATE. The overall tone of this meeting was more businesslike and lacked the dissents of some previous meetings.

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2. Burt reaffirmed the US goal of restoring air control to a fully quadripartite regimen--he specified a "minute by minute" form of cooperation rather than a system which permits the Soviets leeway for one-sided initiatives. Burt also urged that we keep after the Soviets in the BASC and in diplomatic contacts preceding a CSCE commemorative meeting in Helsinki in late July. He said this persistence would have a salutary effect in maintaining allied consensus on the issue.

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3. Most of the new tasks are to be reflected in an overview paper meant for NSC approval at a later date. They include:

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-- A review by STATE/LEGAL AFFAIRS of the legal status of civil air agreements and early post-war understandings on the 10,000 foot ceiling which the Soviets claim still govern Allied use of the

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corridors. Burt also pressed for a specific rejoinder to recent Soviet comments in the BASC which question the legal status of allied civil air access to Berlin.

- Completion by STATE/Policy Planning of a long delayed statement of US goals and objectives regarding the demonstration flight option. Burt added some new specific tasks--in particular, a specific definition of what the US should regard as satisfactory four-power cooperation and an updated assessment of where we now stand with the Soviets on related issues in Berlin.
- A review by DIA of the patterns of Soviet air space reservations to help assess the trend lines and anticipate GSFG training requirements at any future time when we may choose to fly demonstration flights.

4. Burt also requested a JCS briefing regarding the operational plans for demonstration flights. JCS representatives said the plans had just been coordinated. In general, they characterized the plans as a flexible multi-option device which would permit the British, French and the US to simultaneously test different segments of Soviet reserved air space. (The format sounds like a means of finessing British preferences for a "shaving flight" and opposition to US-proposed "end-to-end" flights through Soviet claimed space.)

5. It was clear once again that the Soviets' through their recent efforts to appear more forthcoming in the BASC are trying to direct the West's focus to technical issues rather than the more fundamental issue of reinstituting full quadripartite rights. Several participants noted Soviet reductions in the numbers of air corridors used, the shorter duration of their reservations and increased prior notification time as conveying the impression that the situation is improving. Community analysts, however, noted that these improvements coincide with a seasonal lull in GSFG training activity and warned that Soviet behavior could change later when the training cycle returns to normal. And Burt made it plain that whatever the atmospherics, the Soviets' unilateral moves remain unacceptable.

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June 14 IG on Berlin Air Corridors

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NO.

NIC #03150-85

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19 June 1985

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